

Implementation of Islamic Psychoeducational Counseling to Overcome Learning Problems in Students of PAB 9 Patumbak High School

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates the use of Islamic psychopedagogical counseling to overcome student learning issues, including test anxiety and difficulty controlling learning routines, in Islamic-based private high schools. Data were gathered using qualitative case study methodologies, which included interviews, observations, and document analysis. The findings revealed that counselors employed spiritually integrated psychopedagogical strategies such as psychopedagogy, guided reflection, dzikr practice, prophetic tales, and reflective activities (muhasabah). This approach aided in spiritual reframing, allowing pupils to see scholastic difficulties as part of tarbiyah ruhaniyah rather than as proof of failure. As a consequence, students' attitudes about learning improved, including lower academic anxiety, more emotional control, and increased learning engagement. Despite the cultural taboo associated with counseling services, contextual strategies received initial good responses. This study highlights Islamic psychopedagogical counseling as a contextually relevant framework for supporting student learning experiences in Islamic educational settings.

Introduction

Education is a multifaceted process that includes emotional, social, and spiritual aspects in addition to cognitive ones. This holistic approach is much more prevalent in Islamic education as the development of moral character (*akhlaq*) and spiritual consciousness (*taqwa*) are valued equally with the acquisition of worldly knowledge (*'ilm duniawi*). According to this paradigm, counseling has a developmental and preventative purpose in addition to a remedial one (Winarso, 2023). Islamic psychoeducational therapy is quite relevant in this situation.

In modern educational environments, especially Islamic institutions, learning-related problems such academic procrastination, low intrinsic motivation, exam anxiety, and poor time management have grown more common (Faradilla, 2023). However, these challenges cannot be reduced to technical or psychological issues in Islamic educational situations. Islamic education is essentially focused on integrating intellectual success, moral integrity, and spiritual growth. When learning challenges

arise in such environments, they frequently indicate a gap between students' learning activities and their sense of religious meaning and purpose in addition to deficiencies in study skills or emotional management. Interventions that solely use secular or skill-based methods may thus be inadequate. By providing structured guidance based on both psychological theory and Islamic values, Islamic psychoeducational counseling fills this gap by allowing students to reinterpret learning challenges within a spiritually meaningful framework that promotes motivation, self-discipline, and personal growth (Khairani et al., 2025).

In contrast to conventional problem-based therapy, the psychoeducational method places a strong emphasis on giving students proactive life skills including goal-setting, self-discipline, decision-making, and emotional control (Dewi et al., 2018). These skills, which are taught through seminars, group sessions, and individual counseling, are critical for academic achievement. These abilities take on more spiritual and motivational meaning when they are framed within Islamic principles, such as *sabr* (patience), *ikhlas* (sincerity), and *tawakkal* (Aswar & Nashruddin, 2020).

Khana et al. (2025) show how Qur'anic stories, Islamic metaphors, and prophetic role models may serve as effective instruments for promoting moral awareness and character development among students in their study on spiritual integration in counseling (Khana et al., 2025). However, rather than discussing learning challenges in the academic sense, their conversation mostly concentrates on behavioral and character development. At the meanwhile, Lestari (2025) emphasizes how spiritually oriented self-counseling, which focuses on emotional control and spiritual coping rather than school-based learning issues, may effectively reduce academic stress among students at Islamic boarding schools (Lestari, 2025). When combined, these studies show the potential of spiritually grounded counseling to improve inner resilience and self-awareness, but they also highlight the lack of focus on using Islamic psychoeducational counseling to address specific learning challenges in formal school settings.

Furthermore, because of digital distractions and declining family involvement, pupils in the present generation suffer particular psycho-social difficulties. Academic deterioration is mostly caused by social media reliance, mobile addiction, and a lack of spiritual activities (Khairani et al., 2025). As a result, schools require a strategy that reconnects pupils to their sense of divine purpose in addition to addressing superficial problems. This requirement is met by Islamic psychoeducational counseling, which combines Islamic customs like *dzikr*, contemplation of divine decree (*qadar*), and supplication (*du'a*) with therapeutic approaches including cognitive restructuring and relaxation.

Many academics stress that when students feel understood on a cultural and religious level, therapy is more effective (Afrianti & Anggraeni, 2016). Empathy and trust are fostered when Islamic spiritual beliefs are included into psychoeducational treatments. It allows students to talk about existential issues as well as scholastic difficulties, including "Why am I failing?" and "What does Allah want me to learn from this difficulty?" In secular therapeutic settings, these issues are frequently left unaddressed.

Thus, the purpose of this study is to investigate how Islamic psychoeducational counseling is implemented from the viewpoint of school-based counselors, paying special attention to the tactics used, difficulties faced, and real-world implementation in addressing students' learning issues in a formal Islamic school setting. Little research has been done on how practitioners implement psychoeducational counseling programs based on Islamic principles to address specific learning challenges at the school level, although prior studies have looked at the integration of Islamic values in

counseling for character development or academic stress management. This study provides empirical insight into the contextualization of Islamic counseling models and practical recommendations for enhancing spiritually based learning support in Islamic education by looking at counseling practices as they are applied in regular educational settings.

Method

To investigate the use of Islamic psychopedagogical counseling in addressing student learning difficulties in high school settings, this study used a qualitative case study approach. The introduction of an Islamic psychopedagogical counseling program at Islamic-based private high schools in the suburbs of Deliserdang Regency, North Sumatra, Indonesia, became the case study in this research. The school is an Islamic-based educational environment that combines religious teaching with the national curriculum and provides organized guidance and counseling services for students, but its name is kept confidential to maintain anonymity.

A qualitative approach was employed to capture the contextual, experiential, and value-based aspects of counseling practices that are deeply embedded in religious and institutional cultures. The case study approach was accepted because it allows for a full investigation of a limited system—that is, a specific counseling program implemented inside a specific school setting—shaped by Islamic beliefs, institutional norms, and counselor-student relationships. This technique allows for a detailed understanding of how Islamic-based psychoeducational treatment is conducted in regular school operations (Bahiroh & Suud, 2020).

The main informant in this study was a school counselor working at a selected high school. The counselor was selected through purposive sampling based on several criteria: active involvement in planning and delivering psychopedagogical counseling services, formal educational background in guidance and counseling, and at least five years of professional experience in a school setting. According to Ramadhan and Bahiroh (2021), purposive sampling is a popular technique in Islamic counseling research when certain expertise, background, or experience is needed to address in-depth, value-based questions (Ramadhan & Bahiroh, 2021). The counselor's expertise in Islamic pedagogy and counseling methods was verified through institutional documents, including professional certifications, assignment records, and their role in developing counseling programs integrated with Islamic values. In this study, the counselor served as a key informant who provided reflective insights into counseling practices and program implementation, rather than as a single unit of analysis.

Semi-structured interviews were the primary technique used to gather data, which allowed the informant to express experiences and thoughts while guaranteeing that the main study issues were methodically investigated. Open-ended questions covering the conceptual understanding of Islamic psychoeducational counseling, implementation methods, practical difficulties, and perceived effects on students' learning issues, such as academic anxiety, motivation, and procrastination, made up the interview guide.

To further understand how Islamic psychoeducational therapy was implemented in reality, non-participant observations were carried out in addition to interviews. Group therapy sessions, the employment of psychoeducational modules during counseling activities, interactions between counselors and students in the counseling room, and the incorporation of spiritual elements like *dzikr* and reflective conversation were among the several factors that were observed. Over the course of many weeks, the observation procedure was conducted across various counseling sessions, enabling the

researcher to record recurrent patterns and contextual dynamics of program implementation. To bolster observational results, pertinent internal papers were also reviewed, including activity logs and counseling plans.

Data triangulation was used to compare information from observational notes, document analysis, and interviews in order to increase the findings' trustworthiness. This procedure strengthened the validity of the interpretations by enabling the researcher to verify consistency across data sources and cross-check viewpoints (Lubis et al., 2022).

Thematic analysis was used to analyze the data. After the interview tapes were completely transcribed, the data was manually coded and reviewed many times. Instead of imposing preconceived categories on the data, themes were inductively developed using a bottom-up method, enabling patterns and meanings to emerge from the data. After then, the topics were arranged, honed, and explained in light of the goals of the study and the framework of Islamic counseling philosophy. Peer debriefing and member checking with the informant were carried out to verify the correctness and applicability of the identified themes in order to improve credibility. Khotijah and Rahman (2016) provides examples of how theme analysis is used in Islamic-based counseling research, specifically to identify patterns of meaning in counselor reflections and spiritual narratives (Khotijah & Rahman, 2016).

The informant was given informed consent prior to the interview. The identity of the counselor and institution remains anonymous in this publication to respect confidentiality. The data collection was conducted with respect for Islamic ethical norms and institutional protocol. Rahayu et al. (2022) emphasize the importance of *adab* (ethics) and *amanah* (trustworthiness) in Islamic counseling research, ensuring that all procedures reflect not only methodological rigor but also moral integrity (Rahayu et al., 2022).

Discussion

The results of this study show that academic exam anxiety and ineffective time management were the main learning issues that students at the observed Islamic secondary school faced. Intense dread of receiving a poor grade, increased pressure from parents and the surroundings, inadequate comprehension of the course topics, and internal variables like low self-confidence and negative thought patterns have all been identified as recurrent symptoms of test anxiety. Maladaptive study habits, especially last-minute study techniques (often referred to as *sistem kebut semalam*), frequently made this worry worse by raising stress levels and impairing students' capacity to focus during tests.

Additionally, pupils' learning processes were greatly impacted by time management issues. Due to their involvement in several extracurricular activities, many students experienced cognitive overload and had little time for formal study. These difficulties were made worse by irregular sleep patterns brought on by extensive late-night gadget usage, which left students exhausted and less able to concentrate in class. The continuance of these learning issues was also influenced by a lack of understanding of the significance of efficient time management. These results imply that behavioral patterns, emotional control, and underlying value orientations are intimately linked to students' academic challenges rather than only being cognitive in nature.

Spiritual Reframing as a Coping Mechanism

The operational definition of Islamic psychoeducational counseling in this study is an organized school-based intervention that blends guided spiritual practices based on Islamic principles with psychoeducational techniques. In order to assist students comprehend the psychological and behavioral causes of their issues, the counselor initially offered psychoeducational reasons for learning challenges, such as exam anxiety and poor time management.

Following this procedure, students were encouraged to reframe their scholastic difficulties using Islamic ideas like *ibtālā'* (life trials), *tawhīd* (dependence on Allah), *sabr* (patience), and *shukr* (thankfulness) in guided reflective conversations. Then, as coping mechanisms to moderate emotions and improve self-discipline, spiritual practices like *dzikr* and brief contemplative contemplation were included. Students were given reflective home tasks (*muhasabah*) to reinforce learning outside of counseling sessions. These assignments were designed to promote self-awareness, discipline, and regular study habits. Psychoeducation served as a vehicle for behavioral modification and spiritual reframing in addition to information transfer through this integrated approach.

Spiritual reframing emerged as a central technique used by the counselor to help students manage and overcome learning difficulties. Based on the interview data, the counselor consistently encouraged students to interpret their academic struggles through the lens of divine wisdom and purpose. Rather than labeling difficulties like procrastination or low achievement as failures, they were reframed as trials (*ibtālā'*) meant to elevate the students' spiritual and emotional maturity. This approach aligns deeply with Islamic epistemology, which views hardship as a necessary component of growth and purification (*tazkiyatun nafs*).

The counselor employed questions such as, “*What wisdom might Allah be teaching you through this challenge?*” or “*How can you turn this failure into an act of worship?*”—stimulating self-reflection grounded in *tawhīd*. This was not only comforting but transformative, allowing students to shift their mindset from helplessness to hopeful engagement with their learning process. As noted in the research by Wiguna (2019), the reframing technique in Islamic counseling helps adolescents develop positive self-concept and spiritual resilience when facing personal limitations or academic underperformance (Wiguna, 2019).

This strategy of meaning-making empowers students to interpret delays or setbacks as divinely timed opportunities for *sabr* (patience), *ikhtiar* (effort), and *shukr* (gratitude). For example, students were guided to realign their study schedules with Islamic prayer times and to seek moments of clarity during times such as after Fajr—a practice that reinforces spiritual structure alongside academic discipline.

Research by A'yunin (2019) supports this by demonstrating how reframing through self-management counseling rooted in Islamic spirituality enhances students' academic motivation, especially in subjects they previously struggled with, such as Arabic. The study highlighted how spiritual meaning reduces pressure and helps students accept themselves as learners in process—making them more open to change and improvement (A'yunin, 2019).

From a psychological perspective, this approach resonates with cognitive-behavioral reframing, but Islamic psychoeducational counseling adds a transcendent dimension—where the new frame is not merely logical but divinely anchored. This makes the emotional shift more sustainable and spiritually nourishing. Hakiki (2018) in his study on Islamic reframing emphasizes that seeing failure as part of Allah's decree

encourages internal stability, reduces despair, and instills *husnuzan* (positive assumption) toward oneself and God (Hakiki, 2018).

Another practical strategy used by the counselor was to recast academic challenges as part of a noble human narrative through the use of prophetic stories, such as Prophet Nuh's (AS) tenacity or Prophet Yusuf's hardships. These stories offered students with spiritual archetypes to absorb, therefore improving their emotional literacy and spiritual mentality.

Moreover, Rahman and Indra (2017) explored the *Solution-Focused Brief Therapy* (SFBT) model modified within Islamic counseling, and found that reframing combined with *dzikir* and scaling questions enabled counselees to develop stronger emotional balance and clearer problem perspective (Rahman & Indra, 2017).

The interview also reveals that reframing is used not just cognitively, but spiritually and behaviorally. Students were encouraged to restructure their study routines in line with Islamic principles (e.g., avoiding *ghaflah* [heedlessness], seeking *barakah* in early hours), creating a holistic environment where academic habits became acts of devotion. This practice echoes the findings of Irhas (2020), who emphasized that integrating *zikir therapy* and spiritual focus in counseling leads to improved emotional clarity and learning engagement (Irhas, 2020).

In summary, spiritual reframing in Islamic psychoeducational counseling serves as both a coping mechanism and a developmental framework. It enables students to find meaning in struggle, draw strength from their faith, and develop a mindset that transcends short-term academic performance. This approach not only addresses surface-level learning problems but also contributes to deeper character formation and spiritual grounding.

Psychoeducational Modules Rooted in Faith

The utilization of contextual and faith-based psychoeducational modules is one of the main advantages of the Islamic psychoeducational counseling approach used in this study. The counselor clarified that these modules were created internally to combine psychological techniques with Islamic moral teachings based on the interview. The counselor saw that employing motivational stories with roots in Islamic history, integrating *dzikir*-based relaxing strategies, and coordinating study schedules with *shalat* times all helped to address learning issues including poor time management and test anxiety (Fidiawati et al., 2023). According to the counselor, "students tend to be more receptive when learning strategies are connected to practices they already consider meaningful in their religious lives." These modules served as dynamic learning aids, assisting students in interpreting emotional issues through the lens of Islam.

According to the counselor's explanation based on the interview, the psychoeducational modules were purposefully created to assist students in investigating the underlying reasons of their academic challenges rather than just treating symptoms. The counselor stressed that students were encouraged to consider if their difficulties with learning were caused by poor time management, inefficient study methods, or underlying emotional issues. During this process, students were urged to determine if they were visual, auditory, or kinesthetic learners and to use techniques like peer learning groups or organized study regimens. By framing development as a steady and attainable journey, the counselor emphasized that the modules' goal was to boost students' confidence and enjoyment in the learning process rather than to place blame for deteriorating academic performance.

The modules' material was organized around fundamental Islamic values such *ikhlas*, *sabr*, *husnudzon*, and *tawakkal*, which were contextualized using cognitive and

behavioral exercises. The counselor stated how students were frequently asked to consider whether their nervousness was caused by a fear of failing or an overabundance of worry about external criticism. According to the counselor, children were taught to realize that "effort (*ikhtiar*) is required, but outcomes are not fully within human control." This analytical technique assisted students in refocusing their aspirations while emotionally basing their efforts in spiritual acceptance. This technique supports Jazuli's (2025) findings that psychoeducational counseling combined with Islamic tales promotes emotional control and spiritual introspection (Jazuli, 2025).

The psychoeducational modules utilized in this study were culturally entrenched into the everyday rhythms of Islamic living, rather than being generic. The counselor noted that time management courses, for example, were related to the prophetic paradigm of planned daily routines, whilst motivating materials referred to the Qur'anic idea of *ulul albab*, urging pupils to employ contemplation and reasoning in tandem. The counselor noted that students responded well when academic preparation was presented as part of *ibadah*, adding that "students began to see discipline not as pressure, but as a form of responsibility before Allah." In this way, the modules served as a sort of *tarbiyah ruhaniyah*, cultivating spiritual awareness alongside academic skills, in line with Utami's results (Utami, 2024).

From a didactic perspective, these modules had two purposes: as psychoeducational content addressing real academic impediments like procrastination and exam anxiety, and as spiritual reminders that boosted resilience. According to the counselor, students who had previously shunned regular study routines were more eager to try new planning methods following sessions that mixed storytelling with reflective conversation. According to the trainer, "when students hear stories of prophetic perseverance, they feel their struggles are valid and manageable." This supports Ilyana's (2022) thesis that narrative in Islamic therapy improves emotional endurance and learning motivation in teenagers (Ilyana, 2022).

Furthermore, the counselor included reflection sheets and *muraja'ah* activities in the modules, encouraging students to document their feelings and connect them to Qur'anic passages. According to the counselor, several students reported that writing helped them "be more honest with themselves" and identify patterns of avoidance, late-night study habits, or excessive gadget use. The counselor saw that this reflective practice progressively raised students' feeling of accountability, as learning efforts were reframed as a form of devotion rather than a simply academic requirement. This conclusion is consistent with Padang's (2022) results regarding the impact of spiritual journaling in improving emotional awareness and self-regulation (Padang, 2020).

Overall, the data support the notion that Islamic psychoeducational modules are integral to the counseling process rather than supplemental. The counselor stressed that, unlike secular modules that just address cognitive or conduct, these modules engaged students holistically, addressing mind, heart, and spiritual consciousness (*qalb*). The counselor saw that pupils eventually were less afraid of academic failure and more eager to accept responsibility for altering their learning habits. In this way, the modules served as both an academic scaffolding and a spiritual compass, allowing students to approach learning problems with increased confidence, faith, and drive.

Barriers and Cultural Stigma in Counseling Access

Despite the apparent effectiveness of Islamic psychoeducational counseling, its implementation within the school environment remains challenged by systemic barriers and cultural stigma. Based on the interview, three primary obstacles emerged: (1) limited scheduling flexibility due to the packed academic curriculum, (2) student

reluctance stemming from stigma surrounding the counseling room, and (3) the absence of standardized Islamic psychoeducational instruments.

1) Time Constraints and Institutional Priorities

As revealed in the interview, the counselor expressed difficulties in allocating dedicated time for psychoeducational sessions, especially in formats such as group counseling and class-based services. These sessions often had to compete with core academic schedules, limiting their frequency and depth. This is echoed by Romadon (2025), who found that the overemphasis on cognitive achievement in schools tends to marginalize the space for emotional and spiritual guidance, especially when it is not formally integrated into the school's academic framework (Romadon, 2025).

In many Islamic schools, even though religious identity is emphasized, the operational structure often lacks the scaffolding needed to sustain holistic psycho-spiritual development. Counseling thus becomes "additional," rather than "integral."

2) Stigma toward Counseling Services

One of the primary challenges highlighted in this study was the cultural stigma associated with school counseling programs. The counselor added that many students first saw the BK room as an area dedicated just for "problematic" kids or disciplinary issues. This bad attitude inhibited kids from seeking help proactively, especially for learning or emotional issues. As Sutarto et al. (2019) have already shown, such stigma reflects wider institutional and cultural preconceptions regarding counseling in Islamic schools (Sutarto et al., 2019).

To address this issue, the counselor launched a rebranding campaign, calling the counseling room "*Sahabat Siswa*" (Student's Friend Room) and raising its awareness through casual school-wide contacts. According to the counselor, this symbolic alteration had a significant impact on students' impressions of counseling services. While the rebranding did not instantly reach all students, the counselor noticed a steady rise in voluntary visits, with around two to five students who had never before sought counseling services beginning to visit the room after the rebranding was implemented.

More significantly, the counselor observed a qualitative shift in the students' views towards counseling. Students no longer saw the counseling room as a place for punishment or labeling, but rather as a secure and helpful environment for discussing personal difficulties, social obstacles, or learning-related issues. The counselor described occasions in which students voluntarily entered the counseling room rather than being summoned, including incidents in which students sought help on managing classroom dynamics and sustaining peer connections despite interpersonal discomfort. These findings imply that the rebranding initiative helped to reduce psychological barriers and promote early help-seeking behavior among students.

This outcome lends credence to Tanjung's (2021) assertion that Islamic counseling services require a cultural shift away from a corrective and disciplinary paradigm and toward a developmental and life-coaching approach based on Islamic knowledge (Tanjung, 2021). Although the impact of rebranding in this study is limited in scope, it shows significant promise as a culturally sensitive method for increasing counseling accessibility and normalizing help-seeking behavior in Islamic educational settings.

3) Lack of Standardized Islamic Counseling Tools

The counselor also emphasized the lack of standardized and validated psychoeducational modules rooted in Islamic values. Most of the materials used were self-developed, often drawing from classical sources or inspired by the counselor's creativity. While effective in practice, the absence of formal instruments presents challenges in ensuring consistency, scalability, and scientific rigor. Halid (2016) documented similar findings in their study of local Islamic counseling models, where most tools were informal and lacked empirical grounding, leading to variability in implementation (Halid, 2016).

This limitation also affects counselor confidence, especially when dealing with complex student problems that require nuanced approaches combining theology, psychology, and pedagogy. As suggested by Azhari (2023), the development of research-based, culturally sensitive Islamic counseling instruments should be a national priority, especially in integrating such models into Islamic school curricula (Azhari, 2025).

The Role of Islamic Counseling in Shaping Academic Behavior

Islamic counseling is not merely reactive—it actively shapes students' academic behaviors through moral guidance, spiritual reinforcement, and structured developmental programs. Based on the interview conducted in this study, the counselor utilized integrated Islamic counseling strategies to influence key aspects of students' academic behavior, including time management, self-regulation, perseverance, and responsibility.

One of the most notable transformations highlighted by the counselor was in students' self-discipline and consistency, particularly after being exposed to sessions focused on the prophetic lifestyle (*Sunnah*) and time structuring around *shalat*. These counseling sessions did not merely advise students to study harder but reframed academic behavior as a form of *ibadah* (worship). When students began to perceive their schoolwork as part of their spiritual duty, behavioral change became more internally motivated and sustainable.

This finding supports the study by Suryani et al. (2022), which emphasizes that Islamic counseling contributes significantly to shaping students' learning ethics and daily study patterns through the internalization of religious values (Suryani et al., 2022). The authors argue that by aligning learning with faith principles such as *amanah* (responsibility) and *istiqamah* (consistency), students naturally exhibit improved academic behaviors.

The counselor in this study also facilitated behavioral transformation by targeting specific learning issues like procrastination, distraction from devices, and low confidence. Techniques such as motivational reflection and personalized *muhasabah* (self-evaluation) were employed to make students aware of their behaviors and realign them with Islamic character ideals. This aligns with Rohman (2016), who discusses how Islamic counseling can be used to shape academic habits and emotional responses by instilling values like *haya'* (self-respect) and *tazkiyah* (Rohman, 2016).

Another compelling dimension of behavior shaping was the incorporation of role models from Qur'anic figures and Islamic scholars, such as Imam Shafi'i and Hasan al-Bashri. These were introduced during counseling sessions as behavioral anchors. When students learned that these figures also faced adversity but remained committed to their intellectual pursuits, it fostered a growth-oriented mindset. As Bahiroh and Suud (2020) emphasized, modeling academic integrity and work ethic based on religious

examples provides students with internal standards far more effective than external enforcement (Bahiroh & Suud, 2020).

The interview also reveals how Islamic counseling reshaped students' attitudes toward failure. Through reframing and the internalization of *qada'* and *qadar*, students learned to interpret academic setbacks as part of divine testing and character-building, rather than personal deficiency. The counselor's consistent use of *spiritual affirmation* and personalized *duas* (prayers) helped rebuild students' emotional confidence, which is strongly supported by the work of Ridwani (2025), who concluded that Islamic counseling not only prevents negative behaviors but also activates self-directed positive change in learners (Ridwani, 2025).

Importantly, the counselor incorporated all three elements of learning behavior (cognitive, emotional, and psychomotor) into each counseling activity. For example, in a module on handling learning anxiety, students were taught not just breathing methods (*psychomotor*), but also Qur'anic passages of comfort (*cognitive*) and encouraged to reflect on sentiments of *tawakkal* (affective). This holistic approach is consistent with Azkia et al. (2024), who said that Islamic counseling focuses on character development and academic discipline through full moral-psychological involvement (Azkia et al., 2024).

Counselor as Moral and Spiritual Guide

In the context of Islamic psychoeducational counseling, the counselor assumes a dual role—not only as a facilitator of cognitive and behavioral change but also as a moral and spiritual mentor. The interview with the counselor revealed that their approach transcended traditional psychological guidance by deeply embedding spiritual meaning, Islamic values, and prophetic character building within the counseling process.

The counselor positioned themselves as a *murabbi ruhani*, or spiritual nurturer, encouraging students to view their learning experience as both an academic journey and an act of service to Allah. Through ongoing encounters, introspective discourse, and *akhlaq modeling*, the counselor actively impacted students' moral thinking and decision-making. Windiska (2024) discovered in her study that counselors who internalize this position assist students develop spiritual intelligence alongside cognitive and emotional growth, resulting in more consistent moral conduct and academic perseverance (Windiska, 2024).

This guidance is seen particularly in how the counselor helped students reflect on divine tests (*ibtihān*), align goals with *ridhā* Allah, and reframe self-doubt through *husnudzon* (positive assumptions about God and self). The counselor's language during counseling often incorporated Qur'anic phrases and references to prophetic patience, such as the struggles of Prophet Yusuf (AS) and the wisdom of Luqman al-Hakim. These not only made sessions relatable but also moralized students' internal narratives. Faizah et al. (2025) emphasize that such spiritually integrated narratives serve as moral anchors that allow students to internalize character and resilience (Faizah et al., 2025).

The moral dimension of counseling was also demonstrated by the counselor's active participation in creating discipline, honesty, and accountability. The counselor not only coached pupils on how to manage distractions, but also included conversations about *amanah* (trust), *taqwa* (piety), and *mujahadah* (inner struggle). According to Khana et al. (2025), the counselor's moral presence, as demonstrated by attitudes, constancy, and emotional tolerance, acts as an implicit curriculum in Islamic education (Khana et al., 2025).

Furthermore, the interview revealed that the counselor maintained empathic engagement and spiritual companionship, a practice referred to in Islamic education as *tazkiyah-based mentoring*. This was particularly effective in building student trust and opening up deeper conversations about stress, failure, and fear of disappointing others. According to Gusdur and Diana (2024), counselors in Islamic settings act as spiritual companions (*rafiq ruhani*) who foster healing by restoring the student's inner connection with Allah and rediscovering personal worth (Gusdur & Diana, 2024).

The counselor in this case also acted as a bridge between home, school, and spiritual life, collaborating with parents and religious teachers to ensure a consistent environment. This triangular support structure ensured that moral messages were not isolated to the counseling room but reinforced through congregational *prayer*, parental involvement, and daily routines. As supported by Cahyani and Ayuningsih (2025), the integration of school counseling and family-based moral reinforcement plays a key role in holistic moral education (Cahyani & Ayuningsih, 2025).

In sum, the role of the counselor in this study extends far beyond conventional pedagogical interventions. Through spiritual modeling, ethical instruction, and reflective companionship, the counselor shaped students not just to be better learners but to become morally grounded, spiritually resilient, and ethically responsible individuals.

Conclusion

This study looked at the application of Islamic psychoeducational therapy as a contextual method to resolving students' learning challenges, including test anxiety and difficulty maintaining study habits. The findings show that the counselor used a spiritually grounded method to reframe academic obstacles as part of a larger process of *tarbiyah ruhaniyah*, rather than perceiving them as markers of academic achievement. Through this reframe, counseling served not just as psychological assistance, but also as a faith-affirming process that assisted students in aligning their learning endeavors with Islamic ideals like as *ikhlas* (sincerity), *tawakkal* (trust in Allah), and *sabr*.

According to the study, counseling strategies such as guided spiritual contemplation, prophetic storytelling, integrated *dzikr* practices, and value-laden psychoeducational modules helped students improve their learning-related attitudes, emotional control, and self-discipline. Rather than producing rapid or significant improvements in academic performance, these treatments boosted motivation, decreased anxiety, and enhanced readiness to participate in the learning process on a constant basis. In this setting, the counselor served not only as a facilitator of coping mechanisms, but also as a moral and spiritual adviser, emphasizing the need of academic work and spiritual growth (*falah*) in achieving meaningful scholastic success.

This study concludes that when performed truly and consistently, Islamic psychoeducational therapy provides a meaningful and context-sensitive alternative to traditional counseling methods in Islamic educational institutions. Practically, the findings emphasize the need for schools to improve counselor training in spiritually integrated psychoeducation and to mainstream counseling as a developmental rather than remedial service. Future research should include quantitative or mixed-method studies to quantify the influence of Islamic psychoeducational modules on particular learning outcomes, as well as the development of standardized tools to assess spiritual reframing and learning-related resilience more thoroughly.

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